Frequently Asked Questions

Have a question? We've put together responses to frequently asked questions about information assurance, interoperability, standards, and other ISE topics. You can also learn more through our Glossary of Acronyms & Terms [1].

What is interoperability?

The ability of systems, units, or forces to provide data, information, materiel, and services to and accept the same from other systems, units, or forces and to use the data, information, materiel, and services so exchanged to enable them to operate effectively together.

What is simplified sign-on?

Simplified sign-on is a mechanism whereby a single action of user authentication and authorization can permit a user to access all computers and systems where he has access permission, without the need to enter multiple passwords.

What is Identity Management?

Identity and Access Management is the combination of technical systems, rules, and procedures that define the ownership, utilization, and safeguarding of personal identity information.

What is an ontology?

Ontology is a structured representation of the types of data and relations existing within a domain, such as weather, that is designed to support the exchange and reuse of information. Within the context of information sharing, the ontology is used to more precisely define the meaning of an organization?s data elements and attributes.The ontology provides the basis for a semantic search capability that goes well beyond simple keyword searches to searches that take into consideration the meanings of the search term (e.g. a search for ?dog? should find items that contain the word ?canine? since they mean the same thing). Ontologies help multiple communities exchange information, despite varying terminologies and different operational needs.

What is a technical standard?

Technical Standards document methodologies and practices to design and implement information sharing technology capability into systems, thereby enabling Interoperability.

What is a functional standard?

Functional Standards set forth rules, conditions, guidelines, and characteristics of data and mission products supporting business processes.

Still have a question? [Email the Building Blocks Team for help.](http://www.ise.gov/contact%3Fdestination%3Dbuilding-blocks) [2]